**Prossession of Wireless Sets by the Indian Red Cross Society**

*449. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:†

SHRI RAM AWADESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any organisation, other than the Government/Semi-Government organisations, has been allowed to keep wireless sets;

(b) whether any action is proposed to be taken against the Indian Red Cross Society (Hqrs.), New Delhi, for keeping wireless sets of 'foreign make' without licence, in contravention of the Indian Penal Code and the Indian Telegraph Act, as reported in 'the Statesman' of 3rd November, 1986;

(c) whether some of the sets were deployed during the IX Asiad on temporary licences and that the information of their deployment was neither furnished nor it was in the knowledge of Government;

(d) if so, whether any enquiry has been instituted against the Red Cross or the officials in the Communications Ministry who are involved in this matter; and

(e) whether Government propose to ensure that any such wireless set is not misused?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir. Private organisations are also allowed by way of a licence to keep wireless sets for specific purposes.

(b) No, Sir. The Indian Red Cross Society had filed applications and deposited the requisite fee for renewal of their licence which got delayed because of non-receipt of their deployment plan. Necessary licence has since been issued on obtaining the facts from the Society and its due verification.

(c) Some of the sets of the Indian Red Cross Society during the IX Asiad were deployed with prior knowledge and approval of Government.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Monitoring Organisation monitors compliance of the licensing conditions and operating parameters.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : No supplementary.

DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY : The Indian Red Cross Society is an organisation to serve the poor people in times of need and it has got international obligations also. Why should it possess wireless sets of foreign make? This is something very intriguing. I request the hon. Minister to think about this particular situation.

SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, Indian Red Cross is a philanthropic organisation. Generally unless we get the operating area, we do not give a licence. They work in the case of calamities; that is why as a special case, they have been given storage licence and when an occasion arises—of drought or calamity—they apply for actual area and then we allow the actual licence for the area concerned.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You want to supplement it? Since you have got some instruction. I thought you may like to..

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : Sir, the senior and junior Ministers should sit together; otherwise there will be problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have no control over where they sit. Next question No. 450. Shri Aruna. Absent.

*450. [*The questioner* (*Shri Aladi* Aruna *alias* V. Arunachalam) was absent. For answer, vide *col.* 34 infra.]

**News Coverage of Political Parties**

*451. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) what was the total time of news coverage given to the ruling party at the

†The question, was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Krishna Kumar Birla.